

DM 6461 Seminar I
The Minister as Person and in Context:
The Hermeneutics of Gender, Race, and Class and Liberation

Dates: January 8-12; 16-19, 2024

Location: Schlegel 123

Instructors: Dr. Dianne Reistroffer and Dr. Jamesetta Ferguson

Seminar Description

At the heart of our work together will be discussions of ministry situations—that is, your context for ministry as well as your sense of who you are in ministry, including your pastoral imagination and decision-making. We will also examine the hermeneutics of race, gender, class, etc., and introduce the social scientific research method and how to conduct research for the culminating Project in Ministry.

Seminar I addresses the following D.Min. Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO1: Students will demonstrate an advanced (comprehensive, appreciative, and critical) understanding and integration of ministry in relationship to several theological disciplines, including practical theology.

SLO2: Students will demonstrate skills and competencies in methods of research in practical theology by successfully completing the DMin project and presenting an acceptable report of the project.

SLO3: Students will be able to identify areas of personal and vocational growth in spiritual awareness by the development of a personal-professional plan for self-care, spiritual nurture, and lifelong learning.

Electronic Technology Policy (in class)

Students will need their laptops.

Please turn off and stow phones so they are neither visible nor accessible.

Assignments for Seminar I Preparation:

There are three types of assignments for preparation:

- 1) *Reflection on Your Context* (brief presentation, artifact/props)
- 2) *Reflection on Your Spiritual Journey and Practices*
- 3) *Description of Your Research Question/Problem/Issue*

Reflections on Context

We would like you to reflect upon your context for ministry, either your congregation or other institution or community in which your ministry takes place.

Reflect upon strengths and changes in your setting (ministry context).

Strengths. What are the strengths of your situation? What practices of the community are particularly revealing: its uses of power and ways of making decisions, its rituals/patterns of inclusion and belonging, and/or its care for boundaries.

Change. Are there any significant changes in the *surrounding community* of the ministry setting (e.g., shifts in demographics, culture, economy, political structures)?

Are there changes in the *life of the congregation* or the *life of the denomination* or the *life of the agency* in such things as:

- 1) Changes in lives of the leaders of the organization, either clergy or others, such as family changes—birth, death, illness, marriages or divorces, changes in parents or children of key leaders,
- 2) Changes in personnel (hiring/firing/resignation of key leaders)
- 3) Rise or resolution of conflict
- 4) Restructuring in the organization or governance
- 5) Changes in mission, values, and vision

In light of these reflections, be prepared to introduce and summarize your context to the seminar in 15-20 minutes. You may want to prepare a brief handout of key issues (no more than a page). Consider using other aids, such as photos, artwork, short video/audio clip of a story told, or a map of the neighborhood, to help us understand your situation more vividly. Practice your presentation—keep to no more than 20 minutes if possible.

Students will present their reflections on their context for ministry during the first week of the seminar.

Reflections on Our Spiritual Journeys

As we gather for the first time as a learning community, we will focus on our personal and professional stories with the aim of deepening and clarifying our individual and communal sense of calling as well as sharing the spiritual disciplines and practices that ground us.

Before the start of the seminar

- Please read (re-read) Howard Thurman’s classic *Jesus and the Disinherited*. How was his spiritual and vocational journey shaped? Identify the primary sources of Thurman’s spirituality. Describe the connection between mysticism and social change in Thurman’s life and ministry.
- Write three brief reflection papers* (one to two pages each) in response to the following:

Reflection #1: *What is the Work Your Soul Must Have?*

This first reflection asks you to express why you have chosen to engage and remain in ministry. As Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon once put it: “What is the work your soul must have?” You may wish to draw on poetry, a song, or a visual artifact.

Reflection #2: *What Holds Your Life Together – Spiritual Practices and Life Frameworks*

The second reflection asks you to reflect upon your current spiritual practices. What sustains and grounds you? What is stretching you and helping you to branch out and grow?

Reflection #3: *What Stories Shape and Ground Your Ministerial Identity – The Stories We Live By*

The third reflection asks you to write down a personal story that lies at the heart of your understanding of ministerial identity and that you would be comfortable sharing with the learning community. By sharing our stories, we build our community of learning. We also gain new insights into our own lives and ministry.

Please submit your reflection papers to your professors by Friday, January 12, 2024.

Description of Your Research Question/Problem or Issue in Ministry

When you applied to the program, you were asked to share the research question(s) you were interested in pursuing as part of your Doctor of Ministry project. In one or two paragraphs, describe the subject of your intended research and what you would like to explore. You may find chapter 12 in the *30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher* text helpful as you draft this statement.

The seminar will focus on the research question for the project in ministry on Wednesday, January 10, 2024.

Seminar I Book List and Reading Assignments

Adams, Maurianne, Warren J. Blumenfeld, and D. Chase J. Catalano, eds. *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice*. 4th ed. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018.

Creswell, John W. and Johanna Creswell Báez. *30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2021.

Thurman, Howard. *Jesus and the Disinherited*. (A classic, available on e-books in most libraries, including our own.)

Vyhmeister, Nancy J. and Terry Dwain Robertson. *Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion and Theology*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2020.

Reading Assignments

Reading and preparing for discussion about research and writing in the Doctor of Ministry program – Wednesday through Friday of Week One of the Seminar.

The first book is a reference volume that will guide you in your work in all four seminars as well as with the Project in Ministry. The second book will introduce you to qualitative research. We will also introduce you to the social science research method and the Guidesheet for Writing the Social Science Prospectus as you take your first steps in drafting parts of the prospectus.

Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion and Theology

Read: Preface & Chapters 1, 4-5, 8, 10-11, 15-16

- Preface (pp. 11-13)

- Chapter 1: Definition of Research (pp. 17-24)
- Chapter 4: Human Subject Research, Part 1 (pp. 50-64)
- Chapter 5: Human Subject Research, Part 2 (pp. 65-83)
- Chapter 8: Practical or Professional Theology Dissertations (pp. 107-116)
- Chapter 10: Research Thinking (pp. 127-138)
- Chapter 11: Choosing a Topic (pp. 139-145)
- Chapter 15: Research Reading and Note Taking (pp. 179-194)
- Chapter 16: Research Writing (pp. 195-206)

30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher

Read: Chapters 1-3, 6, 12, 30

- Chapter 1: Thinking Like a Qualitative Researcher (pp. 2-10)
- Chapter 2: Building on Quantitative Research Knowledge to Implement Qualitative Research (pp. 11-18)
- Chapter 3: Making Your Qualitative Project Rigorous and Conceptually Interesting (pp. 19-25)
- Chapter 6: Using Philosophy and Theory in Qualitative Research (pp. 40-49)
- Chapter 12: Scripting a Qualitative Purpose Statement and Research Questions (pp. 95-104)
- Chapter 30: Selecting a Qualitative Design (pp. 268-280)

Reading and Preparing to Lead a Discussion on material from the Green Reader – Week Two of the Seminar

Specific instructions to all participants. Please come prepared not only to participate in, but also to lead, a discussion with the group concerning any or all of these readings. We will determine who leads which discussions when you arrive. Keep preparation simple: we suggest creating a handful of good questions aimed at defining terms and applying them to ourselves and our places of ministry.

Readings for Diversity and Social Justice, 4th ed. (aka Green Reader)

Read: Section 1 (Introduction, Chapters 1, 5, 6a, 6b, 7), Section 2 (Introduction, Chapters 9, 12); Section 5 (Introduction, 63-64, 68, 70, 80, 82); Section 8 (Introduction, Chapters 130, 132, 134-135)

Section 1—Getting Started: Core Concepts for Social Justice Education

- Introduction (pp. 1-6)
- Chapter 1: The Complexity of Identity: “Who Am I?” (pp. 7-9)
- Chapter 5: The Cycle of Socialization (pp. 27-34)
- Chapter 6a: Theoretical Foundations for Social Justice Education (pp. 34-41)
- Chapter 6b: Core Concepts for Social Justice Education (pp. 41-49)

- Chapter 7: Five Faces of Oppression (pp. 49-59)

Section 2—Racism

- Introduction (pp. 65-73)
- Chapter 9: Defining Racism: “Can We Talk?” (pp. 74-77)
- Chapter 12: The Possessive Investment in Whiteness (pp. 87-96)
- Additional reading: “The WMHC Urges Consideration of Racism as a Cultural Disorder.” Found at the World Mental Health Coalition website:
<https://worldmhc.org/racism-as-a-cultural-disorder/>

Section 3—Sexism, Heterosexism, and Trans* Oppression

- Introduction (pp. 341-353)
- Chapter 63: “Night to His Day”: The Social Construction of Gender (pp. 354-359)
- Chapter 64: Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression (pp. 359-362)
- Chapter 68: Generation LGBTQIA (pp. 374-377)
- Chapter 70: Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity (pp. 381-386)
- Chapter 80: Men Explain Things to Me (pp. 415-419)
- Chapter 82: Violence Against Women Is a Men’s Issue (pp. 425-429)

Section 8---Working for Social Justice: Visions and Strategies for Change

- Introduction (pp. 599-603)
- Chapter 130: Reflections on Liberation (pp. 604-610)
- Chapter 132: Toward a New Vision: Race, Class, and Gender (pp. 615-620)
- Chapter 134: The Cycle of Liberation (pp. 627-634)
- Chapter 135: Courage (pp. 635-637)

Final Assignments

1) In two pages (600 words) address the following and send them to your advisor by February 1, 2024 (and copy your Seminar I and II professors and the DMin Office). This is designed, in part, to introduce yourself to your advisor. Ask your advisor for a meeting (in person or by phone) if you have not done so already.

- 1) Provide name, contact information, and identify which DMin track you are in.
- 2) What is your ministry context and role in it? How long have you been in it? (short paragraph)
- 3) What did you learn about your ministerial identity and/or pastoral wisdom through Seminar I? If not something new, was there a deepening or solidifying of what you knew? (paragraph or two)

- 4) What situation or issue in your context do you dream of addressing through your DMin program and project? If not sure, what are some general areas of interest or concern? (a page or so)
- 5) Are there other areas of professional development, education, or formation you hope to engage through the program or project? If so what are they?

2) Do a partial draft of the Doctor of Ministry prospectus (proposal) using the template given in class. More details on this assignment will be provided throughout the seminar. Your first working draft of the prospectus is due NLT Monday, February 19, 2024, and should be sent to your seminar professors, Dr. Reistroffer and Dr. Ferguson.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING (PASS/FAIL):

- 1) Read texts carefully and complete all pre-seminar writing assignments before the start of the seminar (reflection papers, context in ministry presentation, and research question). (25% of the grade)
- 2) Actively participate in all discussions, asking and answering questions and leading sessions on various topics in the Green Reader. This is extremely important for the success of the seminar as a whole. (30% of the grade)
- 3) Do the final assignment for your advisor (5% of the grade) and produce the first working draft of the prospectus for the project in ministry (40% of the grade).

LPTS POLICIES:

As with all LPTS classes, this course will honor these Seminary policies:

Use of Inclusive Language

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. For more information see:

<http://lpts.libguides.com/content.php?pid=469569&sid=4083885>

Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God.

Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and

source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see The Code of Student Conduct, 6.11; the Student Handbook, p. 19.

Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow these Seminary approved guides:

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010.

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

The Chicago Manual of Style. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (bherringtonhodge@lpts.edu) in advance of the course, to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructors of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Missing $\frac{1}{4}$ of the course (2.5 days) may result in a low or failing grade.

[PLEASE NOTE THAT A MORE DETAILED CLASS SCHEDULE WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AS WE GET CLOSER TO THE START OF THE SEMINAR.]